

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Claim 1

The present claimed subject matter as recited in the method of independent claim 1 provides: A method of inviting an assistant entity into an existing communication session established by a service system with an associated transport mechanism for the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session (see Instant specification at page 1, lines 5-9 and FIGs. 1, 23), comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting, by the service system (see Instant specification call-center management system 72), an appropriate assistant entity from a group of assistant entities taking account of context data concerning an existing session responsive to receipt of a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to the session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network to the service system requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session, the request directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing session (see Instant specification at page 53, 21-26 and lines 24-28); and

(b) joining the selected assistant entity to the existing sessions (see Instant specification at page 53, lines 17-19 and 24-26).

A method embodiment of the claimed subject matter concerns inviting an assistant entity (e.g., a customer service representative (CSR) 74) into an existing

communication session (e.g., a session 11) between entities 12A, B, C over a network. (Instant specification at page 1, lines 5-9 and FIGs. 1, 23). A service system (e.g., a call-center management system 72) selects an assistant entity 74 from a group of assistant entities. The service system 72 selects the assistant entity based on context data about the existing session 11. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 24-28). The service system 72 selects the entity in response to receiving a request from a first endpoint entity (e.g., a group member as indicated in FIG. 23) already joined to the existing session 11. For example, a member of a group of friends presses an "invite CSR" button 122 to cause an HTML request to be sent to the service system. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 21-26).

The first endpoint entity is connected to the service system and requests the presence of an assistant entity in the existing session 11. The request received by the service system from the first endpoint entity directly or indirectly indicates the identity of the existing session 11 to which the entity is connected. In an embodiment, the request includes a secret session identifier for the existing session 11, along with additional context about the page currently being browsed. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 24-26). The selected assistant entity is joined to the existing session 11, e.g., "to provide advice" to a "group of friends . . . browsing the Web together and interacting." (Instant specification at page 53, lines 17-19). In this manner, an appropriate assistant entity is selected and joined to an existing communication session.

Claim 17

The present claimed subject matter as recited in the apparatus of independent claim 17 provides: A service system comprising:

a session entity for establishing communication sessions and controlling the joining of endpoint entities to each such session (see Instant specification at page 5, line 28 bridging over to page 6, line 6);

a transport entity for establishing a transport mechanism for each session established by the session entity, the transport mechanism being arranged to allow the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session (see Instant specification at page 6, lines 8-15);

request-reception means operative to receive a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to a session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network, the request being arranged for requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session and directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing communication session (see e.g., a session mediation server 67, Instant specification at page 32, lines 9-18, page 53, line 16 through page 54, line 3, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23); and

assistant-selection means arranged to be responsive to the receipt of said request by the request-reception means to select an appropriate assistant entity from

a group of possible assistant entities taking account of the context of the existing communication session, the assistant-selection means being operative to cause the session entity to join the selected assistant entity to the session (see e.g., a CSM 69, Instant specification at page 31, line 30 through page 32, line 7, page 53, lines 26-30, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23).

A service system embodiment of the claimed subject matter includes a session entity 11, a transport entity (e.g., session transport 15 and/or session transport manager 19), request-reception means (e.g., session mediation server (SMS) 67), and assistant-selection means (e.g., communication session manager (CSM) 69). The session entity establishes communication sessions 11 and controls the joining of endpoint entities to established sessions 11. One or more entities 12 A, B, C can be added or removed as directed by a communication session manager 14. Sessions 11 are modeled in the system by appropriate data structures and method for keeping track of a current existing session and participants thereof, and effecting operations such as adding and removing participants from an existing session 11. (Instant specification at page 5, line 28 bridging over to page 6, line 6).

The transport entity 15 establishes a transport mechanism for each session 11 and effects data communication between endpoint systems corresponding to session participant entities 12 A, B, C through one or more media channels 17a, 17b, etc. (Instant specification at page 6, lines 8-15).

The request-reception means (e.g., a session mediation server 67, Instant

specification at page 32, lines 9-18, page 53, line 16 through page 54, line 3, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23) receives a request from a first endpoint entity 12 A, B, C already joined to the existing communication session 11. The received request includes a request for the presence of an assistant entity (CSR 74) in the existing session 11 and directly or indirectly indicates the identity of the session. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 19-26 and FIG. 23).

The assistant-selection means (e.g., a CSM 69, Instant specification at page 31, line 30 through page 32, line 7, page 53, lines 26-30, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23) selects an appropriate assistant entity 74 from a group of possible assistant entities in response to receipt of the request indicating the identity of an existing session 11. The assistant-selection means selects an assistant entity 74 based on the context of the existing communication session 11 and causes the joining of the selected assistant entity 74 to the existing communication session 11. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 26-30 and FIG. 23).

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of :
: Confirmation No. 1504
LOW, COLIN ANDREW *et al.* :
: Group Art Unit: 2157
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/977,497 :
: Examiner: El Hadji Malick Sall
Filed: October 16, 2001 :
For: INVITING ASSISTANCE ENTITY INTO A NETWORK COMMUNICATION SESSION

LETTER

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450


Sir:

In response to the Notification of Non-Compliant Appeal Brief dated September 6, 2007, applicants submit herewith an amended Section V, Summary of Claimed Subject Matter, with respect to the previously submitted Appeal Brief of February 22, 2007.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 08-2025 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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